



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 11 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
11 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

There still is a good deal of apprehension about US - North Vietnamese talks. Prominent men both in and out of the government are [] expressing concern that the US will not adequately protect Saigon's interests.

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South Vietnamese leaders are making a special effort to allay suspicion.

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On the military front, Communist forces are generally staying clear of large-scale actions, []

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2. Cuba

Tuesday night Castro made a major change in his thesis on revolution which may be aimed at repairing some of his damaged bridges to the Soviet Union.

In contrast to his adamant stand that a rural guerrilla war is the ultimate road to victory, Fidel praised the role of the urban population in the Cuban revolution. This puts Castro more in line with the doctrinaire Communists who insist revolution must be spawned in the cities. It may also encourage urban terrorists in Guatemala and Venezuela.

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3. Singapore

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4. Panama

Arias has now injected the canal treaties into the presidential campaign. He made a speech Monday night calling on his backers to show their rejection of the treaties by voting his ticket on 12 May. Arias [redacted] would push for further negotiations if elected. He undoubtedly hopes this emotional issue will whip up the popular enthusiasm he was unable to generate during the recent impeachment crisis.

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5. Iran

The Shah is pressing for a clear understanding on whether the US will supply his military needs over the next five years. This subject was raised again with Ambassador Meyer on Monday. If the problem is not resolved in the interim, the Shah is sure to raise the issue when he visits Washington in June.

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6. Poland

There are some tenuous signs Gomulka may be losing ground in the factional struggle, but no clear winners are in sight yet. [redacted] Warsaw [redacted] atmosphere as that of a witch hunt with the average Pole unable to see, understand, or influence what is going on.

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7. Soviet Union

The Central Committee wound up its two-day session yesterday with a statement reflecting Moscow's growing concern that events in Eastern Europe will encourage domestic dissent. The statement [redacted]

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[redacted] blamed the West for "undermining socialist society" and disrupting Communist unity.

Little was said about such domestic matters as agriculture. Evidently these were overtaken by the more pressing problems of divisiveness and liberalization in Eastern Europe.

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Luna 14, launched Sunday, apparently did go into orbit around the moon yesterday. Its principal mission probably is to send back photographs of prospective landing sites for a manned lunar program.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Internal Security in North Vietnam: Hanoi's recent publication of a new decree against "counter-revolutionaries" may have been primarily a measure to tighten the regime's control apparatus in preparation for a new and crucial period of the war. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The decree doubtless was a warning to unreliable elements of the population. It may indicate greater concern over both internal security because of the war and over allied sabotage and intelligence operations. It seems likely, however, that the decree was but one of a series of steps the regime took last fall in preparation for the new and large-scale military effort it was then mounting in support of Communist forces in South Vietnam. Some of this concern may stem from the decision to commit substantial additional portions of North Vietnamese armed forces to the conflict and thus reduce those available for security in the North.

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Hanoi Prices:

prices in the North Vietnamese capital:

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--The official rice price is equivalent to about five cents a pound, but rice bought on the black market costs roughly three times as much.

--The "rice" ration is actually half rice and half flour, with the monthly ration based on the individual's job. Most of the rice in Hanoi comes from Communist China.

--Chicken and beef are expensive, running about \$1.50 a pound.

--The official exchange rate is 3.53 dongs to \$1.00 US. On the black market, however, the rate is 5 or 6 dongs to the dollar.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Liberation Front Sends Condolences on Dr. King's Death: Nguyen Huu Tho, chairman of the Liberation Front, has sent a message to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference offering his condolences on the assassination of Martin Luther King. In a broadcast by Hanoi on 9 April, Tho claimed that King had been murdered by "racists" in the US, and alleged that the tragic death of Dr. King pointed up the "bloody suppression of the legitimate struggle of the black Americans" by the Johnson administration. Tho also noted in his message that the US had been making it a practice for many years now to send "black forces" to Vietnam to oppose the "just struggle of the South Vietnamese people."

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